

ROYBAL-ALLARD changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the motion to recommit was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 829, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was unavoidably detained in my district, but had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on both rollcall votes 822 and 823.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, today because of inclement weather and airport delays, I was delayed on two votes.

For H.R. 2564, I would have voted "yes"; and for H.R. 2099 I would have voted "yes."

□ 1315

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I would ask my friend, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY], to explain the schedule this afternoon and for tomorrow. If we are going on Amtrak tomorrow, I would ask the gentleman, why can we not do it today? It is 1 o'clock in the afternoon and we have a good part of the day left.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, this last vote is the last vote of the day. The Committee on Rules will be meeting at 2:30 or later this afternoon to write a rule on the Amtrak legislation that we intend to bring up tomorrow. We do not anticipate any vote on Friday or Monday.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, if I can reclaim my time, I ask unanimous consent that we bring the Amtrak bill up today. There would not be any objection on this side of the aisle. We would be happy to take it up today. We do not need a rule, unless the gentleman plans to close the rule. We do not need a rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EMERSON). The Chair is unable to recognize the gentleman for that unanimous-consent request.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the gentleman to yield for the purposes of inquiring of my good friend, the gentleman from Texas, the distinguished whip on the majority side, are we going to bring up the securities reform legislation?

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Michigan will continue to yield, we intend to bring up that piece of legislation sometime next week.

Mr. DINGELL. Next week, not tomorrow or Thursday, Friday?

Mr. DELAY. Sometime next week.

Mr. DINGELL. Would it come up Monday or Tuesday of next week?

Mr. DELAY. We have not set the schedule for next week, but it would be sometime next week.

Mr. DINGELL. I thank the gentleman.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BURTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. SCHROEDER addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

RECOMMITTING THE VA-HUD APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT WILL ALLOW FOR THE GREATER PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to see that the VA-HUD appropriations conference report, which, of course, includes funding for the Environmental Protection Agency, was recommitted to conference today, primarily because of two provisions related to the Environmental Protection Agency. One is that the amount of money that is appropriated to the EPA is probably one of the lowest amounts for any agency, and specifically with regard to enforcement, there is a 25-percent cut in terms of the EPA's enforcement.

Already we know that the EPA has cut back significantly on inspections and on enforcement because of the level of funding that they have received pursuant to the continuing resolution. In other words, as we proceed in trying to put together an appropriations bill for the EPA, less money can be spent on a monthly basis since October 1, because we have not had an appropriations bill signed into law.

Mr. Speaker, the point I was trying to make is that this conference report, which fortunately was sent back to conference today, cuts back on EPA's

enforcement ability by about 25 percent. Since we are already into fiscal year 1996 and we are operating on a continuing resolution which significantly cuts back the amount of money available to the EPA, already inspections and other enforcement actions have been reduced at the Environmental Protection Agency. This 25-percent cut in enforcement will simply magnify that problem.

What it means essentially is that, although we have good environmental laws on the books, they cannot be enforced. Polluters will go free, and there will not be the ability for the EPA to go in and even know exactly what is going on, whether someone, for example, is violating their discharge permit into waters.

In addition to the problem with enforcement, this House has several times, at least on two occasions now, voted to take out riders that were in the EPA appropriations bill which I characterize as anti-environment, because they prohibit the agency from actually enforcing certain actions pursuant to the current law. Yet, we know that of the 17 House riders that were in the EPA appropriations bill, two of them remain in the conference report, and at least half of them have been placed into what we call report language. They are not actually in the law, but they are placed in the conference report, and normally Federal agencies have some sort of requirement to try to go along with what the report, what the conference report language says.

Specifically, there are two provisions, two of the riders that are still in the bill and I hope will be taken out when this bill goes back to conference. One of the two would essentially say that the EPA has no ability to enforce wetlands protection. Right now the EPA has the authority under certain circumstances to permit the filing in of wetlands where the agency feels there has been substantial or will be substantial detriment to the environment. That has been taken out; that rider is still in the bill, but that prohibits the agency from providing any kind of wetlands protection.

The other rider that still is in the bill is one that would prohibit the designation of new Superfund sites. Again, if we are supposed to use a scientific basis, which we traditionally have, for deciding whether or not a hazardous waste site would be put on the national priority list for Superfund status, then there is no reason why an appropriations bill, or a conference report in this case, should specifically say that no new Superfund site can be designated.

In addition, through, Mr. Speaker, there are at least another eight or nine riders that are put into what we call report language. These are essentially loopholes that are created to provide